a big vintage car rally, with which Government personages are associated with regard to participation in the function, prize giving and so on. They go on encouraging it.

SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE: I agree with the suggestion given by a very senior Member of this House. Sir, I may mention here that this rally is being conducted as a sports event and private organisations are involved init. The suggestion of the hon. Member is very well taken.

Assistance by N.H. D.C.

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*533 SHRI CETTAN P.S. CHAUHAN:
SHRIMATI RITA VERMA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of assistance given by the National Handloom development Corporation for the upliftment of handloom weavers during 1990-91 and 1991-92, state-wise;

(b) the number of weavers benefited therefrom, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the amount of assistance proposed to be given by NHDC during 1992-93; statewise?

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) national Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) does not provide financial assistance to Weavers/States directly. However, the Corporation undertakes supply of yarn, supply of dyes and chemicals, promotion of marketing of handloom goods and organisation of workshops, appropriate technology exhibition and training programmes for weavers. NHDC has also set up marketing complexes to facilitate the sale of handlooms by various State Agencies. NHDC achieved a turnover of Rs. 7337.44 lakhs in all these operations during 1990-91. During the current year upto February, 92 NHDC has reached a turnover of Rs. 3489. 84 lakhs.

(b) The activities of NHDC have benefited a large number of weavers throughout the country while the exact number of weavers benefited by these operations cannot be quantified.

(c) Operations of National Handloom Development Corporation for 1992-93 will depend on specific identa/proposals received from the state Government.

SHRI CHETEN. P.C. CHAUHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the condition of the handloom weavers is miserable. This is the oldestin dusty of our country. Today the condition of these weavers is extremely pitiable. Sometime back, the Government had launched a scheme for supply of one lakh bales of years of the handloom weavers. the scheme was launched through National Handloom Development corporation. It was extended for one more year. Will this scheme continue or be closed?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this scheme was closed in 1991. But keeping in view the miserable condition of the weavers, we are reviewing the situation and we are making efforts to start this scheme once again in a modified form.

SHRI CHETAN P.S. GHAUHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the turnover of National handloom Corporation was Rs.73 crore 37 lakhs during 1991, but this has come down to Rs. 34 crore 90 lakh this year. Will the hon. Minister state the reason there for ?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reason is the closure of subsidised yarn scheme which has brought down the turnover. the resumption of the said scheme will once again increase the turnover.

SHRIMATI RITA VERMA: Mr. Speakr, Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to why the pries of cotton are continuously increasing in the market. last year only, the price of cotton increased by 30-35 per cent. Now this year also, it has increased. Has the hon. Minister considered the reasons there for and has he formulated a new scheme for bringing down the prices of cotton ? For instance, has he taken into consideration stoppage or curtailment of export of cotton? Has any new scheme been formulated to enable weavers to get yarn at cheaper rates? The situation in states like Bihar is very serious.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has pointed out certain things. I would like to submit that as the prices had increased, on one hand we did not allow export of cotton and on the other hand, efforts were made through the agriculture Ministry to boost production of cotton through various schemes launched from time to time.

[*English*]

SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has received any proposal from the Government of Assam for financial assistance to the weavers of golden Assam silk called Muga and whether the NHDC will give special attention to the promotion of these rare brand of silk, the production of which is in real bad shape at present.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the role of N.H.D.C is to supplement the work and the efforts of the State Handloom Agency. Therefore, if such a scheme comes to us we will look into it. We scrut inise the schemes that come to us from time to time and try to find out the areas of shortage of yarn or dyes and chemicals. N.H.D.C then works out different schemes.

SHRI PRIVUS TIRKEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the biggest difficulty faced by the weavers is non-available of yarn at cheaper rates. They get yarn through middlemen who provide it after earning substantial profits. Will the Government open centres at various places to supply yarn to the weavers as is done by F.C.I. by supplying fifes through their goodwans?

MR. SPEAKER: It is an excellent question, but if you ask another question everything will be hotch poach let him onswer this question.

SHRI PIUS TIRKEY: The second part of my question is that to improve its market, will the Government think of providing handloom uniforms in hotels, schools and other estdignments?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, you have spoiled the question.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, our endeavour is to open depots at various places for supply of yarn under modified yarn subsidy scheme which I referred to earlier. Apart from this,, N.I.C. has been asked to open their mills' depots and it Necessary, yarn should be supplied through mobile vans because the users are also facing difficulties. With reference to the second question raised by the hon. Member, I had stated earlier that unless the demand for handloom items is created, this problem cannot be solved.

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: The hon. Minister belongs to Rajesthan and my question also pertains to this State. The hon. Minister does not miss a single opportunity to purchase Kota saree whenever he visits Kota. He is very fond of Kota sarees, Kota 'Doria' and Kota Masuria.

MR. SPEAKER: He means your wife is fond of and not you.

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: Kota saree industry is on the verge of closure. I would like to ask whether the Kota sarees will also be included in the National handloom Corporation Scheme/ My second question is whether silk yarn will be made available for sarees and whether the National Handloom

Corporation will send sarees in the market with its trade mark and also open its own showrooms in order to ensure that buyers get genuine Kota saree?

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: We will take the views of the hon. Member into consideration. If the State Government sends a proposal in this regard, we will think over it.

SHRI DAU DAVAL JOSHI; A proposal from the State Government has already been sent.

[*English*]

Supply of containers to Ports

*534. SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHT: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of containers available at various major ports at present, port-wise;

(b) whether the Government have received any request from major ports for supply of more containers;

(c) if so, the details thereof, port-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to meet their demands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTILER): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) containers are generally owned or taken on lease by shipping companies. The total number of containers at different major ports as on 25.3. 1992 is as under:-

S.No.	*Name of Port*	*Total number of Containers (in Teus)*
1.	Bombay	11458
2.	Calcutta including Haldia Dock Complex	1808
3.	Vizag	275
4.	Jawaharlal Nehru Port	5910
5.	Cochin	1960
6.	Kandla	1189
7.	New Mangalore	131
8.	Tuticorin	526
9.	Paradip	nil
10.	Mormugao	nil
11.	Madras	2003